Designed in Death

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Summary

Hannibal Lecter is not an ordinary psychiatrist; he has a dark, hidden past. A reign of terror that has gone on for centuries. From Johann, to Seth, and Hannibal, many names make up one man. A chaos demon, rather, wearing a perfectly placed person suit. He has always stood in the darkness alone. That is, until he meets a unique human named Will Graham. For the first time since he was human, Hannibal sees an opportunity for friendship. Will the empath feel the same and embrace his true nature or will it turn to blood and chaos? The demon is curious to find out.

Notes

For @CamilleCailloux 's Hannibal Gore Fest 2019!

The wendigo demon Seth/Hannibal was created about two years ago and is written by @AchillesLament. Will is written by my talented writing partner, @You_are_as_alone_as_I_am. We hope you enjoy! :D

Chapter 1

It was the eighteenth century. That was something he knew. But the woods weren't something that Johann Lecter was accustomed to, or overly familiar with, being a liberal minded doctor, and royal adviser to the king... until recently that is; it was a far cry from how he'd lived. But the mad King had issued a pardon. Christian, while King, had become fond of Johann, even when he'd found out about the affair his adviser, doctor, and friend had had with his wife, Caroline. She was in exile now, but she was alive, as was their daughter, Louise, who Denmark believed to be the King's and not Johann's. Be that as it may, she was safe.

Now the Lithuanian was on his own. Left to his own devices but at least he was free and alive. He could survive, he knew how to hunt, to ride, and was quite intellectual.

That was what he did, survive. He'd managed to build a home, he hunted, and had become familiar with the land he thrived on. But there were whispers, howls, and growls in the night. He'd seen a creature, not human, not animal. Somewhere in between. A demon? His father was a priest so he knew the concept, even if he wasn't an overly religious man. The creature killed, had long talons, horns, black eyes, and admittedly it frightened Johann. He kept clear and ignored the bones and bits of skin he'd find from the creature's feeding frenzies.

It seemed to leave him alone, but he was unaware he was being watched...and not by the hell beast he'd become aware of that howled in the night. On one late evening, full moon, he ventured out. It was cold, and he needed more firewood for the hearth. Armed, he had opened the door, and no sooner than his boot had touched the soft damp ground he was thrust back against a tree and a dark figure with red burning eyes approached. He did not know that it would be his last night as human.

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Centuries passed, and Johann had become Hannibal Lecter. Times had changed, and he'd adapted with them, but he was who he was: A demon of chaos, a creature of destruction and darkness, but he always walked alone. He remembered his past, he knew who he'd once been but the same man who'd healed and saved, who'd wanted good for the world and the people in it, no longer existed.

Hannibal. But his real name, the name he'd been given that night, against that tree was something very few knew. A part of him, evil as he was, still longed for companionship, someone to walk into the shadows with and to bring terror to those they deemed worthy. In over two hundred years and many 'person suits' later, he'd still yet to find what he was seeking.

During the day, he looked like any human, handsome, shorter hair as opposed to his longer locks in Denmark and Lithuania, fine suits, and garish dinner parties. He was well liked. He even helped people on occasions as they visited him weekly for their therapy sessions. From surgeon to psychiatry, Hannibal found that as a demon who could possess and control a mind,

he much preferred it when they went to the darkside all on their own ...with some guidance, of course.

Today, a visit from Agent Jack Crawford had him smirking. They are all looking for the Ripper, which was amusing on it's own but with the Shrike flapping its wings, they'd enlisted an unofficial agent to help them with their endeavor.

Will Graham.

After the initial meeting, which hadn't bored Hannibal, and after what had occurred with Abigail Hobbs, he waited in his office for their first conversation. There was a beautiful tragedy that lingered and danced around every curve and angle to Will. Perhaps in the way that he averted his eyes, trying so hard to not look into the hellacious depths of those he profiled or even just spoke to day to say. An empath. Glorious.

What really caught the demon's attention, however, was that he could not read his thoughts, or sway him. He'd tried during that initial meeting, willing him to meet his eyes, and yet nothing, then again when they'd went to Garret Jacob Hobbs' home. In the time he'd been a demon, he'd never once met a human he could not control. Yes, this Will Graham was worth getting to know.

At half past seven, Hannibal rose from his chair, and went to open the door. He could smell and sense Will before he even saw his face.

"Hello, Will. Right on time. Please, come in."

Will walked in, jacket over his arm. He was anxious, nervous and reluctant as he always was to social situations, though one on one was a little easier than trying to handle a crowd.

"Hello, Doctor Lecter," he said, flashing a small, brief smile that didn't quite meet his eyes. His blue gaze flickered over Hannibal, taking in his fine clothes, buttoned up, perfectly styled, and utterly closed off. Where he could see through most, there was nothing available to see in Hannibal. Yet. It was what kept him from saying no to Jack when he'd asked him to talk to the psychiatrist. Curiosity.

Niceties. Appalling really, especially when the demon could sense the darkness wafting off of Will like the steam that rose from exposed cooling entrails against a cold night.

He smiled back, long fangs glinting, razor sharp. They weren't abnormally prominent in this form but certainly more apparent than most humans. Hannibal closed the office door and went right to the liquor. "May I tempt you, Will?" Hannibal began with a very slight smirk before turning to face him again. "Wine or whiskey? Nothing so relaxing as a good spirit to loosen the tongue."

Will was unable to mask his surprised. "Do you offer alcohol to all your patients, Doctor Lecter? I thought this was a professional visit," he said, walking around the room. He tossed his jacket over the back of a very expensive looking chaise lounge, and tucked his hands in his pockets, looking at the books, paintings, everything that adorned the room. So much to

take in, and every inch seemed exquisitely chosen, artful, unique, nothing haphazard. All intended to showcase a facet of Hannibal Lecter.

Hannibal looked Will up and down, then smiled a little wider. He walked to his desk and procured a paper. "I've prepared this for you. For Jack. It says that you are able to return to the field and are more or less sane," he explained, and once at Will's side, he handed it over. "Now we may have that drink, as well as begin our conversations. Perhaps unorthodox and not typical for myself and a patient but what I am interested in, Will, is not professionalism."

Will raised his eyebrows and paused a moment, finally meeting his gaze. Odd. Usually he could get *something* from looking in the eyes. Hannibal had exceptionally arresting, deepset, honey tinged eyes that gave nothing away. There were no lies or deception he could detect, however, and he was impressed at how forthcoming and honest he was.

“Well, I give you points for avoiding the usual bullshit your standard psychiatrists do, for now, though you’ll forgive me if I’m a bit skittish,” he said, taking the drink. “Thanks. So what exactly are you interested in, then, if not my mental health?” he asked.

“I’m not sure therapy will work on you. Stealing into other minds has taught you how to fortify your own,” Hannibal stated, also referring to the fact that he was unable to get inside his mind as well. The demon took an indulgent pull from his glass and then went to sit in his chair, waiting for Will to sit opposite of him, should he choose to do so. “I’m interested in how you perceive the world, and those in it. Perception is a tool that is pointed on both ends.”

Hannibal was aware Will had good in him too. A need to help others. It was cloying and would need to be worked on, but for now he wanted to play into it a bit, so his face took on a more serious tone. “I also feel a staggering amount of obligation. I feel responsible. I’ve...fantasized scenarios in which my actions may have allowed a different fate for Miss Hobbs.”

Will should be relieved, and in a way part of him was. Relieved to be cleared to work - it was, after all, what he really wanted. It remained to be seen just how different this *Doctor Lecter* was from all the other psychiatrists he’d met in the past, but so far he was proving himself to be quite separate. In any event, the man was definitely interested in what Will thought of him, and he did detect a streak of narcissism, which wouldn’t be too much of a shock in his field. But that didn’t bother Will. He was never a kiss up anyway.

“With a father like Hobbs, Abigail’s life was never going to be anything but tragic. Some might say we did the best thing anyone could have for her. It’s not as though she was robbed of a happy family. She’s young enough though that we can still help her, maybe give her some guidance. I want to believe there’s hope for her,” Will said, taking a drink and savoring the fluid as it slid down his throat.

“You feel a familial bond with Abigail. So do I. We are her fathers now, Will. It is our obligation to guide her and protect her. If Jack doesn’t already, he will see her as a suspect, based on the way the girls were killed and that he did not kill her,” Hannibal offered, taking another sip. “Every family loves differently and has their own versions of that love. What is normal to the spider, is chaos to the fly.”

And the demon did *so* love chaos.

While it felt strange to Will to admit to forming this odd family borne of bloodshed, he had to admit, Hannibal had a point.

“Such as it is, we are. I think Jack will be hard on her. He lacks any sense of boundaries that most people might have.” It was tempting for Will to deflect attention away from himself, always easier to focus elsewhere.

“I would like to believe I did the right thing, for her, for his future victims,” Will mused quietly.

"How did it feel killing Mister Hobbs?" Hannibal asked, downing the last of his drink. When Will wasn't looking his eyes flashed black, just for a second, from the anticipation of his answer.

“Just,” Will said, biting the word off through his teeth crisply. He looked up at Hannibal, licking his lips as his own sapphire eyes took on a slight gloss at the memory. “And *powerful.”* Long fingers traced the rim of his glass before he took another pull from it.

There it was...what the demon had been hoping for, what he’d sensed. “God loves killing, he does it all the time. He enjoys the chaos he reigns down on his beloved worshippers, even more so when the blame is laid at the feet of darker forces, blaming them for what he has done,” Hannibal explained, finishing his drink. “Is it harder to imagine a killer’s point of view, now that you’ve done it and enjoyed doing so yourself?”

Will shook his head. “Not harder, likely the opposite. Like a well-worn glove that seems to get more comfortable each time I put it on again.” He laughed bitterly and looked up at Hannibal with wider eyes. “Good thing for doctor/patient confidentiality. There are only certain things I can tell you that would break that bond, and everything else is hypothetical, isn’t it, *Hannibal* ?” he asked, deliberately using the good doctor’s first name with a soft smile on his lips. A small manipulation, perhaps, but an innocent enough one.

Ah how versed he was in the art of manipulation. Hannibal knew it well and could all but smell it on another. It pleased him. "If you were my patient, even a hypothetical might warrant a phone call to the proper ear, but you needn't worry about that, Will. We are merely having conversations. I hope them in the strictest conversation. A perk of our blooming friendship."

He smiled at Will, not missing the first name basis there, and rose to stand near him from behind. He clapped a gentle hand on his shoulder, trying to rest his thoughts again as he sniffed him. Nothing.

Will wasn’t sure how he should feel about that, but it somehow gave him a small sense of reassurance, that there was a sense of confidence between himself and the doctor. He turned just at the moment Hannibal had dipped his chin, nostrils flared, towards his neck, and furrowed his brows, taken aback.

“Did you...were you just smelling me?” he asked incredulously.

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It was a peaceful night at home, just Will and his dogs, and he was reclining on a dog-hair covered rug, tinkering on an old boat engine and slowly sipping a tumbler of whiskey. A perfect night, in his opinion.

Just then, Buster, his smallest dog and the one who fancied himself the big protector of the whole group, lept off his dog bed and raced to the door with a deep growl.

“Hey! Buster, *git* !” Will said in a stern tone, but the dog was scratching at the wood and jumping up and down to try and look out the small window nearby.

Will knew his animals, they could get rambunctious over the odd raccoon or skunk walking by, but the body language on Buster was protective, defensive, not predatory. He quickly flicked off the lights, shrugged on his jacket, and picked up his 12-gauge, looking out the window before reaching for the knob.

“Buster, get back, tsst!” he said, but before he could reach down and grip his collar, the tiny dog darted out and was across the front lawn, small paw prints leaving a trail in the snow.

“Shit. The rest of you, STAY,” he instructed. Winston sat obediently, blinking at Will as he closed the door behind him.

He ran out across the field; the full moon illuminated his way, though once he got into the dense underbrush of the trees, shadows cast across his path made it tougher to follow the little footprints.

A small bark echoed against the night, and he took off in the direction the sound came from. Just over a fallen, snow covered log he found Buster growling and stopped in his tracks. Will bent down to attach the leash he had with him. The dog cooperated, but his tail and ears were up, like there was something in the trees.

Will stood still, listening. As he turned, he heard another sound. Footsteps. Slow and purposeful. Not like an animal, but like a human.

The creature wanted Will alone, so he sent a shrieking shrill, one only a beast could hear and Buster broke free from his owner's grasp, running back to the house. Excellent. No interruptions.

Pointed horns, sharp teeth, and red eyes were seen as the demon stepped out from behind a tree. He screeched an eerie howl and then came up behind Will in seconds. He licked the sweat from the back of his neck to taste him as long curved talons grasped but didn't scratch.

No sooner than he'd done so, and he was off to his right, taunting. "Yes, Will…"

The slithering voice wasn't human but he wanted him to know he *knew him* .

Cold fear gripped the base of Will’s spine and crawled up his neck in the presence of the creature. This was no animal, no human either. Will was never a superstitious man, never

believed in ghosts or demons. But this was like something from a nightmare, and he began to wonder if he was hallucinating.

He had to be. Except the skin the being had tasted with its' tongue was pricked up, goosebumps raised and hair standing on end. Will dug fingernails into the palms of his hands to try and wake himself up, but to no avail. No, *this was real,* he thought as he felt a warm trickle of blood drip from his hand where he'd cut himself in desperation.

"Who... *what are you* ?" he whispered, throat dry as he tried to still his pounding heart. The adrenaline surging through his body was changing his scent, he knew it had to be. His sweat grew acrid, bitter, even against the cold of the West Virginia winter night.

The creature approached, running its long tongue over razor sharp teeth as it approached Will. "Older than you can imagine, human," the demon bellowed, his voice serrated, like a nightmare song that wouldn't end. "I am chaos… I am death."

It zoomed around Will once and then stood right before him, towering over the curly haired man by at least fifteen inches. All of the forest seemed to hush, a nod that even they were frightened as the moon reflected off of opaque skin. A stark contrast to the bright white snow.

A spirit being that could take form, enough form to touch him, to fog the air around them. Will brought his hand up to his face then, crescent shaped wounds cut into his skin. He touched them. It all *felt* so real.

He took a deep breath, a sharp swallow of ice cold air burning his lungs. "Am I... *dead* ? Why are you here for me? What do you want of me? What is your name?" he asked, trying to gird himself, make his voice sound stronger than he felt, but the tremble was audible. He couldn't conceal it.

"You are no more dead than I," the wendigo-like creature answered, gesturing between the two of them with long, gangling fingers. "I am Seth. A demon is most accurate to what I am. Once a man, like you. I've existed for centuries and find you interesting. In time, you will see what it is I want."

Before Will could speak, the demon sped off so fast, the curls on Will's head moved from the wind force of it.

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Will stood shirtless in front of his bathroom mirror, splashing water on his face after a shower to try and get a hold of himself after the strange encounter. Buster was fine, all the dogs accounted for, and as he looked at his own face, he wondered what the fuck had just happened.

He was wide awake. He was present. And some demonic entity had just presented itself to him.

"In time you will see what it is I want..."

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Will was disheveled; dark circles under his eyes, clothes even more wrinkled and slept-in-looking than normal, his beard scruffy and face pale when he banged on Hannibal's door a few nights later.

It was not his forte to ask for help in a situation like this, but if he went to anyone else, it would get back to Jack. He couldn't risk it, couldn't chance anymore rumors going around about him. And he trusted Doctor Lecter. Who better to help with what was clearly a psychological problem. If that's what this was. He didn't know anymore.

Hannibal opened the door promptly, it was late and visitors were not commonplace at that hour. He smiled when he saw Will.

"I haven't slept. I think I'm going crazy. I need to talk to you, Hannibal. I've...I've *seen* something…"

"Of course. My home is always open to you, no matter the hour. Please, come in."

Once Will entered, Hannibal closed and locked the door behind him, just in case. His face was concerned but it was clear his head had yet to touch his pillow. The doctor often had late night hours, but it wasn't his person suit that had beckoned for him to be awake tonight. The demon was more than pleased.

"Come and sit. Tell me what it is you have seen."

Will removed his glasses and put them in his pocket, rubbing his eyes and sitting back in the chair the doctor had offered. "It was the other night, in the woods, near my house. I...I haven't been sleeping, and at first I thought it was a dream or...or something but...it's not. I don't think it is. I saw a...a creature. He knew my name. A *demon* ," Will said, looking up at Hannibal and making eye contact finally as he enunciated the last word harshly, as if saying it might conjure him into that very room with them.

Hannibal looked at Will, not in disbelief but in an assessing manner. It was feigned, naturally, as he knew the truth already. He always knew, was always one step ahead of most people. He crossed one leg over the other.

"Have you been sleep walking, Will? A lack of sleep can often conjure the most freighting images. It is possible that that is what has occurred, and that this demon you saw was a manifestation of the darkness that lingers in your mind."

Will sighed. "If I have, I haven't left any signs of it. And since I live alone, there's no one to tell me if I have. I used to, frequently. I'd wake up in the living room, or walking into something, falling, stepping on something. I've even woken outside before, in the yard. But there's always a sign it's happened. My feet are dirty. The door is open and the dogs got out. This was different, Hannibal. I was...I know I was awake. At least, I'm fairly certain I was." Will huffed in frustration."The creature said I would know soon enough what he wanted. He said his name was Seth. Doctor Lecter, we are men of science. How could it be real?"

"I am still not certain it is. If not a dream, it is very likely that it was a stress induced hallucination," Hannibal insisted, though with a veil of concern in his eyes. "When one is under the magnitude of strain that you experience daily, Will, it is the body's only method of decompression. To thrust the darkness out. A proverbial exorcism if you will."

Will nodded and exhaled shakily, trying to convince himself of the doctor's words. "I'm holding on here by a very thin thread, Hannibal. I'm afraid I'm not myself. I don't know what's real or what's not...I feel like I'm...like I'm fading. I need you, Hannibal," he said, blinking with vulnerability he couldn't hold back at the older man before him. He felt shattered by the lack of sleep inside, his head vibrating and body weakened.

Hannibal reached out and held fast to Will's shoulders, grounding him, especially since he could not enter his mind. Perhaps it was more interesting that way. "You are real, Will, just as I. I will see you through this, you needn't worry. I can help you find what you seek."

What Will was seeking, Hannibal knew, was himself, and the demon was more than willing to help him find that. One way or another.

The doctor's hands on his shoulders immediately calmed him, like some force of nature sending a drug of some kind through his body. It was a welcome relief, and it was also highly unusual. Will Graham was decidedly not the touchy feely sort; in fact he typically shied away from anyone touching him. People held and transferred too much energy, too many of their own emotions….it was messy, confusing, a burden Will resented and hated. Of course it was also what made him good at his job, but it was the exact reason why he had to keep up such strong emotional boundaries. Here, though, was Doctor Lecter, and he felt warm reassurance. He felt somehow safe and stable. He looked into Hannibal's eyes then - amber, flecks of gold, like fire, but behind them...nothing. Shadows, smoke. He'd usually see something there, something that would make him look away in most people. With Hannibal…

"I believe you," he said simply, continuing to hold the doctor's gaze, before finally looking away, cheeks stained crimson as he realized he'd been staring.

Touch wielded a power all its own. It gave foundation and strength, love. It was capable of other things too and Hannibal had expressed them all over the years. Blood, pain, fear, the things in which he most had an affinity were not of his intentions now. Now as he found Eros being the predominant present. But such emotions were not commonplace and suffering would eventually come to fruition.

"Good. Now, may I offer you some coffee or a very early breakfast?"

The howling, screeching demon was in his cage for the time being. Time being something he had plenty of where others did not. Everything he did was to garner what he most wanted. Will's companionship.

Will's stomach growled in answer, as if controlled by some other force, and he couldn't help a sheepish grin. "Both, I think is the answer."

Chapter 2

As the weeks passed, Hannibal and Will met for their conversations, and once night fell, the demon would watch. One might say *stalked* was a better word, but being an elder demon and strong meant he had a level of patience others of his kind did not possess.

In the meantime, Seth had fun, the Ripper's killings continued, along with a bevy of other, non-linked cases of pure brutality. They were so different that no one was able to link to the two distinct chains of murders together. Like blood and chocolate they were different, equally powerful in their effects on their own, but while most wouldn't put them together, they were housed in the same vessel: Hannibal 'Seth' Lecter.

With each new murder case, Hannibal was there for Will, his paddle, but he wasn't steering him to calmer waters. What would be the point of that? He went as far as to peek into his window on occasions, just a flash of black skin and horns to unnerve the empath, then he was gone in a flash. Breaking down or attempting to, Will's mind was needed for what was to come. It pleased him in no short degree that it was proving to be harder than he'd imagined; Will Graham was quite strong. It was an inconvenience, but it only meant the human was worthy.

But Seth could also be… *impulsive,* and persistent. Tonight, he'd decided that it was time to move things to a new level. Blood and breath were elements used to undergo change, and there would be plenty of that.

Perching near Will's home, the demon waited for Will's return where he would make his move, ah but this was going to be fun. Maybe he would even let them have a bit of dance before hand.

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Will drove up to his home, his sanctuary in the midst of his torment, though as of late he had very little in the way of any peace. His mind was running a hundred miles an hour as boots crunched against snow, and when he opened the door of the little farmhouse, he was surprised to see his dogs all staring at him, still as could be.

They looked scared. Almost as if another, larger animal were around. He turned back around and walked back out onto the creaky porch. "Hello? Is anyone out there?" he shouted. No neighbors for miles, and it was dark out.

Silence.

Going back inside, he felt something. A presence. The hair on his neck stood up, and he felt like he was being watched. And he was. A hand suddenly latched onto his shoulder from the doorway behind him. The same sharp talons from before sat dangerously close to skin but didn't pierce.

"It is time, Will. Come with me, outside. Leave a note on the door for Alana for the dogs."

It was almost polite. No sooner than the hissed words were echoed, the creature backed outside, waiting for Will to do as he bid. Would he come or would it come to blood? Seth hoped for the latter.

Will whipped around, grabbing for the creature wildly. Behind him, standing there was an enormous being, seven feet tall. The same he had seen that night in the woods, then again here and there in glimpses, as if he was being taunted. The same black skin, black eyes now instead of red. The gangling limbs and horns were present, and as the creature smiled, he could see long sharp, serrated teeth.

Will's fist caught the edge of his jaw and the demon grappled with him before landing heavily beneath him on the ground. Will screamed, spittle and blood dripping from his own lips from a blow he'd caught just before landing hard on his knees. He straddled the beast, holding him down - or trying to - between his legs, and began landing blow after vicious blow to his face. He beat him until his knuckles ached. Blood and tissue tore free, and he couldn't tell which belonged to him and which belonged to the demon, but when he looked down, he saw the face of Hannibal Lecter smiling up at him through smiling bleeding teeth.

"What the...fuck…" he gasped, the image fading back to Seth in an instant.

Oh but the demon was pleased, black skin nearly concealing the blood smeared across his face.

"Delicious," Seth hissed, and then used Will's surprise to slash his arm with the point of his long claw. "You will begin to feel your body go numb, Will. Shortly after, you'll find that you cannot do anything more than speak and breathe. I suggest you get in any lingering violence while you can."

Will swung frantically as he felt his arms and head grow heavy, and within moments, just as "*Seth* " said, he could no longer retaliate. He lay limply, staring up in terror at the creature, awaiting his fate.

Seth smiled, watching the inevitable come to pass. Once Will was unable to move, the demon punched him in the mouth, just once, drawing a bit more blood which he leaned down and licked. He all but howled at the taste of the coppery nectar and hoisted Will in his arms. "Time to go home."

Will could only watch with a mix of horror, confusion and disbelief. Why had he seen Hannibal? Was this creature, Seth, actually the same as the man he'd trusted so implicitly? The name lingered on his lips, the only thing he could still do as the paralyzing agent kept him utterly immobile.

"Hannibal…?"

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An hour later and Will was bound to a St. Andrews' cross in a dimly lit room. Seth was nowhere to be seen and he stayed left like that for a good hour more, trying to see what he could and possibly find a means of escape.

Finally, the clacking of expensive loafers were heard and Hannibal emerged from the shadows, pushing a tray next to him with several sharp instruments. "Hello, Will."

The brunet lifted his head weakly, eyes bleary as he opened them to look at the handsome doctor.

“So it’s true. You and Seth are the same...but..how? Who... *what are you?”* he asked, his voice hoarse from a parched throat.

“I see you have regained feeling,” Hannibal stated, removing a scalpel from the table as he stepped closer, slow and steady. “Ever the profiler, aren’t you, Will? I would be far more concerned about what’s to be done with you, than who I am. Yet here you are, seeking answers. It’s admirable, in it’s own way.”

Will blinked and shook his head, sluggishly trying to get a grip on himself though still not able to feel much.

The human turned demon wearing the suit of a human doctor was mere inches from Will, in his free hand reached out to stroke his face. “I won’t kill you. Not unless I have to, but this world is a better place with you in it.”

A lick of his lips and then he removed his hand. “Seth and I are one in the same. I was once a man, like you. A doctor to a mad king centuries ago. I was cast out, just barely alive. A demon found me, he saw.... My potential and sired me to be like he was. I see that same potential in you, but I am giving you a choice. Will you come with me or deny the darkness that is innate in you unlike any human I have ever known?”

“A demon? I don’t...I don’t understand, why me? No...no, I’m not...I’m not like this. You’ve misunderstood me, I’m not like you. I don’t delight in suffering, in darkness. Just because I can see the minds of killers, doesn’t make me one,” Will insisted.

“You act as though you only tolerate, and you crucify me for being a monster while you deny yourself the pleasure to delight. I do not believe that to be true, Will,” Hannibal countered, rubbing the blade of the scalpel over Will’s chest, not cutting yet. He clucked his tongue. “I can smell your darkness, even though you try to justify it as righteousness. But you will come to see that I am right through blood and breath. Chaos is the one thing we have in common and perhaps the most. That is why I have chosen you. We are conjoined.”

Hannibal carved a heart into Will’s chest, no medicine for pain, he wanted him to feel it. Just as the sting of rejection was cutting him, so the blade to Will. The blood began to trickle down and he leaned closer, his long tongue extending to lap it up as his eyes blackened in a partial shift. “I can taste your nature.”

Will gritted his teeth through the pain, tears filling his eyes and betraying his weakness. As the cold air of the room struck the newly exposed wound, it stung painfully, and he hung his head, gasping as he tried to control his fear.

This being, or demon, or man - Hannibal - *Seth* - was going to kill him. He had to try to survive this, somehow. What did he want? Simply his surrender? Did surrender involve

possession? It certainly sounded like that's what it wanted.

If he couldn't beat him physically, and he wouldn't allow him to go free, then manipulation was the only thing Will had left. Perhaps he could make him believe he would give in. But capitulation couldn't be too sudden.

"You've marked me, so clearly you won't let me go. You'll kill me if you don't get what you want. Is it my soul you want?" Will asked, his voice strained as sweat collected in the hollow of his throat.

"You are not capable of being possessed, your forts are stronger than even you may realize," Hannibal hissed, watching him. "I want you to *become* what you always have been, even if you do not wish to see. Come with me. I will make you just like myself and we can wreak havoc together."

Will knew he had no choice. He would resist all the way, but the only way to survive this was to agree, at least on the surface - appear to agree. Everyone had a weakness, and he was determined to find *Seth's* weakness.

He struggled at his bonds, laughed and shook his head in resignation. "You have me under your complete control, *Hannibal* .. I have no choice. So I will comply," Will said, chin dipped down as he looked up with dark eyes at the man before him.

"Cunning boy, you believe that you can outwit an elder demon with your placating?" Hannibal asked, laughing and shaking his head. If he wanted to simply force the transformation on Will, he would have already. If he wanted him dead, he would be dead. "It doesn't suit you. Do you feel it sitting bitter on your tongue? I want for you to *want* to come to me. I am patient, generally speaking."

Will looked at him, trying to decipher what he meant, but there was nothing but empty darkness in his eyes. He swallowed thickly and nodded. "As you wish. I'm in no position to fight you," he said sarcastically.

***

And so it continued, for the next twenty-four hours, at least. The demon known as Hannibal tortured Will. Nothing overly maiming, but enough to drive him to a feral state of mind. Enough to *hate* and to seek vengeance.

The next night, he'd fed Will a lovely heart served with red wine and pomegranate reduction, paired with seasoned vegetables, and saffron rice pilaf. It was simple, but the blood in the heart really set well on the tongue. He couldn't let him die, physically. Not yet.

The demon left for a few hours after that and returned after he'd given him time to sleep. Before waking him, he unchained the slightly drugged profiler, let him in the dungeon, and introduced an equally influenced man there. A criminal and a vile one at that. All Hannibal had to now would be to wait.

Will felt groggy, and was relieved to realize his hands weren't restrained when he went to rub his eyes. He was weak, though, likely a result of the toxin or whatever it was Hannibal had injected him with. As his vision came into focus, a figure took shape near him, and it wasn't Hannibal, or Seth. A younger man, dark brown hair, large, wolf-like brown eyes staring unblinkingly at him, as though he were prey being stalked even though he lay there helplessly.

"W-who are *you* ?" Will asked, his tongue stumbling at forming words.

"Randall," the young man growled as he stood, his gestures and gait very much resembling that of a beast. He snarled, reaching to pick up a headdress that was nearby. With it on, he now had long fangs, fur, and hardly looked human as he stalked closer snarling.

Fear triggered adrenaline through Will's body, and his limbs began to respond as he sat up and tried to take inventory of his surroundings without taking his eyes off the other man. In his periphery, he could see he hadn't been moved. He was in the same unfinished basement that resembled a dungeon, dark and damp, where the Saint Andrews' cross had been.

"Randall. I'm sure if you're here you know who I am. And you certainly know Hannibal, I would guess. What is it you want?" he asked cautiously, hoping to reach his humanity if it were possible. The mask and his behavior - predator like - made it seem he might have a species dysphoria. No doubt one of Hannibal 's patients manipulated to do his bidding.

"Shut up!" Randall yelled, the sound dark and animalistic. He lunged at Will, trying to gnaw at the skin of his neck and hopefully rip out his larynx.

Through sheer adrenaline, Will rammed his elbow into Randall's jaw hard enough to knock him off balance a bit. It had taken all his strength to do, however, and he stood on wobbly legs, willing his strength to come back to full force. He couldn't afford to wait too long, however, and he slammed into the man again, both rolling to the floor together.

Randall flipped Will into his back and began clawing at his chest and face, his methods more feral than calculated. It was his weakness, even if he didn't know it but he did want to please Hannibal. Growling was all he offered in the way of communication as he tried to kill him before he could be killed.

Struggling, Will fought back as animalistically as the other man did, though he found himself guarding more than attacking. He punched and scratched, landing a shot to his eye and clawing back at his face until he was able to get his hands around his throat. With all his might, he squeezed, crushing on his larynx to cut off oxygen. It took every ounce of strength he had, and he thought he was going to pass out himself.

Randall's strength was in his abrupt attack; a surprise rush with a lot of power was how he killed. He didn't have much stamina, mostly due to his lean form. Slowly, gradually, Hannibal's protege weakened his grip on the other's arms and slumped to one side, and when he rolled over, Will moved atop him to choke him further, until all life finally left his eyes.

Hannibal stepped out of the shadows, in the room the whole time and clapped. "I'm immensely proud of you, Will."

Damp curls clung to his forehead and Will was covered in sweat as he breathed hard to try and get his breath. “Was this some kind of...some kind of fucking *test* ?” he demanded harshly, not caring about being crass, the adrenaline still pumping through his veins at having just crushed the life out of a man fighting for his own.

"It was not a test per say, I knew you would be the victor," Hannibal praised, offering his hand to Will, should he wish to take it. It had been an exercise. A lure to help pull the darkness within outside.

Will narrowed his eyes at Hannibal, nostrils flaring with anger and confusion. He looked down at his hand as though it were a hot poker. “I thought you were my friend. My guide. You tried to kill me,” he spat out, blue eyes wide and growing glassy with emotion. It cut to his heart.

"I am your friend, Will. Were I not, you would know," Hannibal explained, sensing the anger and pain from Will. The fact that it hurt him was confirmation that they would be together always. He would eventually make him like himself. "Just as I knew he would not kill you. You are cunning and powerful. What I do now *, is* to guide you to your true self."

“Guiding me to my true self? I...how does sending this feral beast to attack me do that? I killed him with my bare hands. Is that what you want? For me to kill? Is it because of ...because of what I do? How I can … see?” Will asked, trembling now. He wasn’t sure anymore if he should be terrified or furious. Everything was becoming more and more confusing.

The demon was a bit surprised to sense a tinge of fear from Will. He looked at him, considering his options. "What you see is merely an aspect. Tell me, am I wrong about you then? Did you enjoy killing him just now?"

The pendulum swung before his eyes, and yet the only killer there was himself. If Will was being honest with himself, the one sensation that was present, that overrode all others in the moment he crushed the life from the other man’s neck, it was power. Control. Pleasure.

“Good. It felt *good* ,” he admitted, though his voice was deep, he shook slightly at the admission..

"Killing feels good to God too, he does it all the time. Even a demon is not so very different from He," Hannibal explained, stepping closer to Will. "The power you felt… you can feel it again and again, for eternity, should you choose."

In his mind’s eye, Will felt himself pulled back, through the center of himself, and he closed his eyes and gave in, knowing his instincts were trying to guide him. Images flashed before him, through his life, times when he had indeed been powerless to control events, people, circumstances. The temptation offered by this demon was tremendous. Will was a man of righteous vengeance, though, and Seth was chaos, about death at any cost. Could he be a force of any neutrality? Or would he fall under the allure of the power chaos brought?

It was a risk he was going to have to take.

“You have convinced me, Hannibal. The risk to remain here is too great. I did feel powerful when I killed that man.” Will paused and dipped his chin, looking up through his lashes at Hannibal. He was hardly in any shape to *flirt* , but if he didn’t miss his mark, he thought the man might have a soft spot if he asked nicely.

“Am I in any position to ask for conditions?”

Hannibal gestured for Will to join him. "Of course, Will. As I said, I wish for you to come with me but only at your choosing. Let me pour you a drink and make you more comfortable, once you have showered."

The flirting wasn't missed and it appealed to him greatly. Was it a ploy or sincere? He was eager to find out. Besides, should Will run, *Seth* could catch him in the blink of an eye.

Will stepped off the table, bare feet touching cold concrete, and gave Hannibal his hand. The touch sent a shiver through him, one that made him gasp, but it wasn’t cold.

His hand was warm.

***

Freshly showered, Will sat in comfortable pajamas made from some fabric that felt like angels whispering against his skin, and the softest slippers that were like walking on clouds. He sat in a comfortable wingback chair in Hannibal’s living room in front of a crackling fireplace. His stomach was sated from the earlier meal and now he sat with a glass of red wine in hand.

Once you made a deal with the devil, things apparently became quite comfortable.

But the deal hadn’t exactly been struck just yet, and Hannibal had graciously agreed to listen to Will’s conditions, so the time to talk business had arrived. Will watched the flames dance in the reflection of his glass as he swirled it, the wine almost the same color as Hannibal’s eyes, and he looked up to meet those dark mirrors looking back at him so intently.

“My conditions. I’m not opposed to killing. I recognize what I felt was an addictive sense of power, and what you’re offering is a fulfillment of that desire.” Will paused and sighed deeply, almost as a point of acceptance.

“But I have a strong sense of right and wrong, and I don’t want to take innocent life. Only those that...deserve death and suffering. A sword of justice.” Will licked his lips and raised his glass to the man that sat opposite him, hoping he wouldn’t be denied.

"As I mentioned previously, I was once a man. A good man and a doctor. I saved lives," Hannibal explained as he sipped his wine, enjoy it as though he were Dionysus himself. He knew that it was more likely than not, that Will would change once he became a demon, though there were some demons that still retained a bit of their humanity. He was willing to let the proverbial chips fall where they may.

"I agree to your terms, Will. Should you continue to feel the same once your becoming is complete, then that will be up to you."

“Then, I accept,” Will finally said, and raised the glass to his lips, drinking it. The oaky, lush fluid washed over his taste buds and saturated his senses unlike anything such wine he’d had before, and as it’s warmth flowed into his belly, he wondered if he’d ever regret this moment.

There was no room for regrets now. Will’s future was in motion. His eyes shimmered and his lips curled into a subtle smile.

Hannibal smiled, nodding. "Excellent. I suggest you make arrangements for your dogs. I've already willed Alana to watch them for you up to now. I suggest she remain their charge. I can do this for you, if you like?"

There was also the matter of packing Will's things. He would need to be with Hannibal at his home for some time when the change happened, if not move in entirely.

Will’s dogs. Part of his heart broke at the thought of not seeing them again. But he couldn’t be sentimental at a time like this, and who knows what he would be capable of in his changed form. He’d never forgive himself if he harmed them.

“Please...please do,” he said, his voice cracking slightly.

Hannibal nodded, knowing it was hard for Will, even if it was a feeling he was no longer capable of having. "I assure you, the sacrifice is well worth it. Perhaps we should go see them once more, you can pack your things."

Will’s eyes widened at the offer. “Thank you, Hannibal. I’d like to say goodbye to them.”

A small show of mercy, but it meant a lot to Will.

***

He was surrounded by wet noses and fur, and his dogs sensed his sadness, even if they didn’t know what was going on. Winston buried his face in Will’s shoulder while Buster stood on hind legs, licking his face. The brunet couldn’t help the tear that rolled down his cheek as he murmured reassurances to them, telling them they were all good boys and girls. That he’d see them again. To be good for Alana. They were everything to him for so long. Winston pulled back and looked into his eyes, big, brown, soulful eyes that seemed to understand deeper than the others.

“It’s ok, boy. Take care of them for me,” he said, smiling even as his own blue eyes were wet.

Winston nuzzled Will again as the others surrounded him comfortingly, everyone clamoring for pets.

It hurt, but he knew they would be just fine. The question was, would he?

Chapter 3

Hannibal and Will returned to the demon's lair, and once inside, he brought in his bags and put them in his room.

"I will need to shift into my true form to change you, Will. It will be painful," Hannibal explained, stroking Will's face. Admittedly, he was fond of him, one might say it was love. As much as a demon could possess at least. He was glad he did not have to kill him. The rest of the world could burn as long as he had him. "Do you have any questions or requests before I begin?"

Will stood before the other man and looked in his eyes. “Everything I need to know I expect will come to me with experience. Let’s just...do this,” he said, taking a long, deep breath.

“Very well,” Hannibal agreed, and then began removing his clothing. Once he was nude, he set them aside, smirking at Will. He then began to shift. His eyes went black, skin turning opaque as long horns sprouted from his head, his whole body elongating and slimming. His nails changed to the same talons that had paralyzed Will before and he stood, looming over him. Arms opening, he smiled, long fangs glistening.

“Come to me, beloved.”

Will’s mouth felt cotton dry. He’d watched with rapt attention, transfixed by Hannibal’s beautiful body, his handsome, masculine form. There was no doubt, that was exactly what he was, muscular, bronzed, a thicket of dark hair covering his chest and trailing down between his legs. He was strong, virile-looking. By anyone’s standards, incredibly good looking. The handsome sensual features began to twist into something altogether different as he changed before his eyes, taking on a nightmarish form, the very same creature that he’d seen before. Seth, the demon.

With a pounding heart, he walked forward towards him, trembling, and extended his hands, palms up, willingly. Blue eyes looked up into endless wells of inky darkness.

Seth looked at Will, black eyes meeting blue, and placed his hand over his chest. "This heart will beat to a different melody. It starts with blood and breath, Will," he hissed, and leaned forward, his face near the crook of his neck, scenting the last of his humanity.

"Are you ready?"

The last of Will’s fear faded as he looked into the endless shadows of Seth’s eyes and began to see his own face reflected back at him; the image started as shattered fragments, each piece coming together, like dappled oil running across glass and coagulating in one spot to take the form of an image. He couldn’t see it yet.

“I’m ready,” he replied, his voice stronger than he would have thought.

There was the power that Seth knew Will had. He grinned darkly and then began.

It didn't take long, a bite, an exchange of blood and he watched as Will fell to the ground. "Your human body is dying, pay no attention to it. It matters not in the end. We all die, in one way or another, and it is well worth the sacrifice for what's to come."

It started with a total loss of strength in his limbs; Will fell to the ground and lay there, looking up at Seth, a burning sensation traveling up his arms. When it reached his neck, panic set in, his brain firing the message that his body was, in fact, dying. Thrashing about like a fish out of water, Will's entire body seized up, shaking violently as he gasped desperately for air that would do absolutely no good.

The transformation had begun.

Everything went black, and then as if being sucked into a vacuum, sensation returned in the form of more agonizing pain. Like millions of shards of glass cutting through his skin, he felt like it was being cut away from muscle and bone, tissue separated with razor sharp blades. An inhuman scream tore from his throat, which felt raw, like he'd been screaming for hours prior, which he very well may have. Time seemed to blur for Will, and he rolled to his stomach, or where his stomach should have been, retching from nausea. It was then that his spine flexed of its' own accord, arching too far, and he could hear as well as feel the flesh of his back tear open.

His whole form seemed to be changing and shifting, legs growing longer, arms, torso, ending with what he realized were horns, emerging from his skull. Long, heavy, thick. He collapsed again and lay there, incapable of speech, breathing heavily through his nostrils as heavy steam billowed from his open mouth.

Looking down, he saw black, gleaming feathers. Black as night, inky dark, layered over muscular, velvety black skin.

Panicked, he tried to stand, and realized he couldn't. His body was…. *wrong* . Different. He got to his hands and knees…. *no...that's not right*...

It was exquisite, Seth thought to himself, watching as Will transformed. Not a wendigo but he'd taken on the form of his own making. A ravenstag.

"Beautiful," he murmured, the sound serrated and dark even in that tone. The demon looked at the other, elder to newborn. A fledgling monster. He smiled, and gestured towards the lake. "Come, Will. Let me show you what you have become and give you your true name."

Will stumbled, struggling to find his footing on strange legs. His body was heavy, bulky, center of gravity off, and he was getting about on all fours. He was some kind of a horse, or a deer, and this was so strange, it felt like a fever dream. Still, he gained enough balance to follow Seth, finding with each step he took, he felt stronger and more assured.

Seth lead him to the lake, so that he might gaze upon his new form. "Ethan…" he proclaimed with a smile. "All that are newly born must take with that a new name chosen by the one who made them. The name is Hebrew in origin and means one who is strong, firm, and long lived. That is precisely what you are, my beauty."

He ran his hand down Will's back, encouraging him. "Behold the great Ravenstag, Ethan."

Looking into the still, glassy surface of the water below, the full moon shown brightly and illuminated his reflection, and Will saw himself then. His new self... *Ethan* .

Enormous eyes blinked, surrounded by long eyelashes, irises black as night, like pools of oil. His neck was covered in a fluffy cloak of shiny black feathers, and a large rack of antlers adorned his head. He exhaled heavily through his nostrils, and it came out as a snort, billows of warm air creating clouds in front of him as he stomped at the ground in front of him with brand new hooves.

Can I change back? Will I ever be human again? What is this new form? What am I now? Am I a demon too? His mind was full of questions racing as he turned his head from side to side and paced back and forth, looking at himself in the water. He was majestic looking. Strong. Muscular and powerful. Sleek. Handsome.

Speech would come to Ethan in his primal form, even if it was only telepathically. Seth knew he would learn these things in time. In fact, since he was maker, he could penetrate the forts a bit, if not eventually completely, but it would go both ways. "You can change back whenever you wish, Ethan. You simply need to will it so. This form is your demon form, your true nature. Your horns are paralytic, just as mine are, but you may find you have powers all your own. Such is the beauty of your transformation. As they say, with great power comes responsibility. Even for a demon."

Hannibal emerged once more, Seth caged anew and he reached his hand out to run it over the feather and fur there. "Exquisite, Mylimasis."

Ethan shook his head, feathers billowing in the wind. *"Can you hear my thoughts? Can we communicate this way?"*

"Yes. When you reach out to me."

Hannibal smiled and removed his hand. "Come, let us return."

***

Will spent the next few days getting used to switching back and forth between human form and his Ravenstag form. Seth took him into the woods and taught him how to hunt in that skin; of course Will knew how to hunt as a man with a gun, or fish, but as this new creature, it was totally foreign to him. Even learning to run was new, but once he did, he'd never felt more free or powerful in his life. He could run so much faster and was physically ten times stronger than he was as a living mortal.

He learned how to use his horns as a paralytic, as Seth directed, and what it would do to an animal, but it was time to take a human victim.

They went into town together as Hannibal and Will. Will had found someone suitable through the FBI database, and Hannibal planned the rest.

The plan as it stood was Hannibal would lure the victim outside into the alley behind a restaurant, his car parked nearby. Ethan would be waiting outside and use his horns to paralyze the man. They would take him with them and the rest...well, Hannibal would likely ensure nothing went to waste, Will was sure.

***

That evening, Hannibal caught sight of his target. Mason Verger, the vile heir to Verger fortune. He took pleasure in harming children, his own sister, and countless others. He was more than suitable, he thought to himself.

Getting him in the alley wasn't hard. The demon could mimic the voices of humans, so he chose the voice of a frightened child to garner the attention of the pig breeder, he stood back and waited for Will - Ethan - to do his work as he watched from the shadows.

Mason walked down the alley, grinning fiendishly, hungrily, in hopes of finding the little one to offer a chocolate too and then he'd take him back to his home and….

"Come out, wherever you are, little piggie. Mason won't hurt you. I have a chocolate for you," Mason called out, grinning deviously and darkly as wild blue eyes scanned as best he could down the dark, desolate alleyway.

Ethan's hooves clopping on the pavement must have sounded out of place to the man, surely, but it likely couldn't compare to the sight of a black, feathered stag, weighing close to five hundred pounds, slowly emerging from the shadows, one great black eye staring at the filthy human. He paused long enough for Mason to see him fully and allow the image to sink in before putting his horns down and turning to charge down the dead end alley.

Nowhere to go, coward.

Mason was surprised to say the least. But he didn't let his fear show. He laughed but did so as he tried to run. It was futile. Ethan pinned him to the bricks, his horns sinking into soft flesh that gave way easily. Not a mortal wound. Enough for the venom to slide into his bloodstream and take over.

"What in the world? I am terrified and enchanted," Mason gasped as his body started to go numb. He went limp as Seth emerged, terrifying all on his own.

"Perfect. Now, let us get this pig home where he belongs."

Ethan changed form into Will, and stood naked, pulling the clothes he'd brought with him from the trunk. Once he was dressed, and Hannibal was too, he helped pull Mason's body into the vehicle, binding his wrists and ankles, leaving nothing to chance. "Looks like we're all set," he said, finally getting into the passenger seat and buckling up.

"Quite," Hannibal agreed with a pleased smile and started the engine on his Bentley. He buckled up - a mere formality - and off they went back to their now shared home.

Once they arrived, they moved Mason inside and down to the dungeon, where Hannibal got Mason secured to the very same cross that he'd had Will on before. He walked over and handed Will a glass of wine that he'd brought down with them. "Did you study his file, Will? Do you know the awful things he's done to children? What would you like to do to him in their name?"

Will's eyes were dark, as black as they were in his Ravenstag form, pupils dilated with his desire for righteous vengeance. He stalked around the man, his walking almost changed completely since his transformation took place. He was stronger, more confident, bolder, in every way.

"I want him to feel what those children felt. Fear. Unrelenting anguish." He took a knife from the table and looked at Hannibal.

Hannibal's eyes were dark as well as he watched and listened to Will's words. What a beautiful horror. Not to him but to Mason surely or anyone else who might have been there to bare witness to his beloved's becoming. "Yes, Will. He deserves nothing less."

Mason started laughing. "Oh I so enjoyed playing with them. I drank martinis made of their tears. Mmmm… "

Will spat in Mason's face with contempt. "And now, we will feast on more than simply your tears. You will not die quickly, Mason Verger. You'll suffer every nightmare you exacted on those children, and worse, you will beg for death, but it won't come quickly."

He turned away from Mason and quickly disrobed, leaving his clothes on the floor as he faced Hannibal, blue eyes locked on amber. Naked, he knelt on the ground before his maker, head bowed, and shook as he began to transform into Ethan. Eyes squeezed shut, he arched backwards and howled, a ragged, feral scream as antlers emerged from his scalp, parting chestnut curls and his skin began to change. Black velvet and feathers took over his human skin and he grew and grew, his moans and screams getting deeper until they stopped completely and he finally stood in his final form as the Ravenstag, bellowing great huffs of hot breath and stamping his hooves on the ground.

Black eyes turned towards Mason. No mercy, no humanity, only a lust for blood. For his soul.

Hannibal shifted after taking off his clothes, to join Will, horns and talons growing long from his head and body, skin as black as coal, long snarly teeth ready to tear. Mason babbled to himself, neither demon really paying him mind. Once the shift was complete, Seth walked to the foul man, mentally communicating to Ethan his plan. He would begin the torture and watch as he finished him.

He procured a scold's bridle and placed it on him, this way they would only hear his screams, should there be any - Seth hoped there would.

Ethan felt a surge of adrenaline in his veins, heart pounding in excitement as he watched his counterpart set the stage for this man's fate. He felt no tinge of regret or fear. He knew what kind of horrors Mason had exacted both on his own flesh and blood as well as countless

innocents. This would be rich, beautiful karma to behold, a painting of their own creation in brushstrokes of blood and agony.

The first method of torture, beyond the bridle, was chosen. Long wooden splinters, sharp as needles. One by one he inserted then in the soft bed under Mason's nails. It only took seconds before tears pricked those crazed blue eyes and guttural sounds of pain joined with them.

"Music to the ears, would you not agree?" Seth asked Ethan, licking his lips.

Black eyes framed in long thick lashes blinked. " *It's perfect. More…"*

"He isn't saying out loud, Mason, but believe me, he wants more…" Seth hissed to their prey, his face close enough to bite the Verger heir should he have chosen. He didn't and instead used a talon to rake across his chest, flesh ripping deep, making the blood spill as Mason screamed. Seth laughed and resumed with the splinters under each nail, driving them in a millimeter at a time to make the pain last.

After he finished, he turned back to his beloved and used their link to communicate that time.

" *Would you like to participate or observe? The rack sets unused or I will let you take over, if you wish."*

Ethan paced restlessly, hooves clomping on the floor as his breath fogged the air around them. He shook his head and then drew very close to Mason, inhaling deeply, the scent of fear and pain thick there now. It pleased him greatly.

"When I began, I will take him to his end. Be sure you've taken all you want before you give him to me," he said through the link they shared.

Seth gave a slight nod of acknowledgement, a sly smirk on his horrific face. The rack could be enjoyed another day, he wanted to see what Ethan would do. Oh was he curious and utterly delighted. He quickly moved Mason, binding hands from a hook in the ceiling in the middle of the room. Ethan would have three sixty space to do his work.

Seth backed away from Mason and ran his bloody hand along the Ravenstag's feathery back.

"Mason, I do believe the greatest work towards your transformation has yet to take place," he whispered darkly and then casting black eyes from terrified, once crazed blues to that of Ethan's. "He will finish your becoming. It will be great indeed, though you might not agree. A pity… for you."

"Please... " Mason sputtered, no longer cocky, looking between both creatures but his eyes rested on Ethan. "Kill me quick or let me...make you rich."

"The wealth I want is in the tears of his agony. I will drain him until there's nothing left. With his last breath, he will beg for death. I will not give it until I've feasted on his pain to my fill."

Ethan walked around Mason, and snagged a corner of his trousers on his sharp antlers, ripping them from his body.

Seth said nothing, he wouldn't miss a minute of everything Ethan was about to do. Only a deep growl of approval was heard as he watched. Mason gasped, but tried to keep his composure.

"You get right to the point. Oh, I like that. You're not a quitter." Mason grinned, but the fear was there. Seth could all but taste it.

With a great bellow, Ethan moved behind Mason and lowered his head, the tip of his antler sliding up from the inside of his calf and up his thigh, up and up until he reached the split of his ass.

He didn't stop moving up, though the slide slowed and became more of a wet, heavy pull.

The sound of Mason's ragged screams combined with the vicious tearing of tissue, but that didn't stop him as he dragged sharp bone up, penetrating his anus and rectum. With a harsh jerk of his head, he released him, shaking him free as blood and feces spilled down the inside of the man's legs freely.

Ethan's great unblinking, black eyes, dark as night, met Seth's, and he turned back and slammed into Mason's torso. An enormous bruise began to bloom along his ribcage, and the beast's lips curled back as he scented a fresh wave of fear from the evil man.

It was certainly more than fear now. The man would know there would be no mercy. There would be no coming back from what was being done to him now.

The enormous Ravenstag reared back on his hind legs and brought them crashing down on the human's back, allowing the full weight of his body to be added to the hanging man as he sank his teeth into the soft tissue of his shoulder and tore through soft flesh, fat and muscle, right down to bone. Blood burst forth in crimson ribbons as his arm hung loosely.

Guttural screams and cries of pain resounded thickly and loudly from Mason, all hope dying a bit more with each one. Seth growled with pleasure, enjoying the show. He smiled darkly, hissing out a 'yes'.

Ethan watched Mason hanging as his body began to go into shock, and he knew simply by virtue of how the human form worked, he would not have much longer for the man to suffer before he would lose consciousness.

"You'll find no peace in death. Your soul will be cursed to an eternity of anguish and pain, Mason Verger. You play? You pay. Your time to pay has come."

With those words, that Seth delivered to Mason for him, Ethan lifted his head, razor sharp antlers piercing his soft, white gut, slicing straight up his belly, disemboweling him. The room, already foul with the smell of feces, grew even more rank as intestines dribbled out with blood and other viscous fluids in a wet mess on the floor.

It was utterly chaotic and beautiful. Seth shifted back into Hannibal, his crimson coated hands clasping together as his nostrils flared.

"Exquisite."

Ethan shifted back into human form as well, panting heavily as blood that had coated his antlers dripped from his head down his neck, bare shoulders and chest. He stood naked, as he did when he transformed from beast to man, watching with satisfaction as Mason took his final breaths.

“It’s beautiful,” he whispered, voice rough, and blue eyes still almost black with pleasure turned to look meet amber.

Hannibal, also naked, stepped closer to Will, his hand going to his face. "This is all I ever wanted, Will, *for both of us*," he said, reverence in his tone as he gazed into the endless oceans of his eyes. "You have taken trash and from it, formed an artwork all your own."

The touch of his maker’s hand on his face felt like electricity coursing through his body, like a power that energized him further, and the pride and love in Hannibal’s eyes poured over him and into him like a force of nature. Beyond nature, really. Will’s eyes flitted between Hannibal’s lush, decadent mouth, and crimson red eyes, and something inside the man reached out to him that made him want to reach back, devour and be devoured, consume and consummate. He placed his own hand at Hannibal hip, fingers curling into bare flesh, smearing blood from his victim that caked beneath his fingernails.

“I want you, Hannibal. I want you to take me, and I want to possess you,” he whispered in a deep, ragged voice. He wasn’t even sure he said it aloud, yet it was communicated all the same.

"So it shall be, Will," Hannibal rasped, entrails on the floor near their feet. He kissed him again, his long tongue snaking inside his mouth, licking at every unexplored corner. His large cock grew hard, pressing against Will's body, his hands slipping down his back to cup the full muscle of his ass. He rumbled his delight once he pulled back. "Now and always."

Will felt himself press closer to Hannibal, his body moving against the taller man’s like liquid melting around solid, the slightly softer flesh of his belly giving way to the length of his erection.

His bare feet were covered in blood, but he pressed his weight to his toes to shift the swell of his cock against Hannibal’s hip, his own tongue yielding in one moment and in the very next, diving deep to seek more of this new, strange taste. His arms snaked around Hannibal’s neck for balance, fingers possessively tangling in silvery brown tendrils. “In life and in death,” he gasped between breaths.

Hannibal knew Will’s blood, knew his mind, and his breath. He had his soul and with that, Will had him. “For centuries to come,” he murmured and then leaned down to his chest to bite there, right over his demonic heart. Teeth broke through flesh and he lapped at the blood that flowed from the wound. A consummation indeed. Beloved communion of one another’s flesh and blood, but it was far from Holy. He grunted, snarling possessively, his free hand wrapping around his lover’s cock, stroking deftly.

Will’s head fell back and a low, nearly feral scream tore from his lips at the bite, an expression of desire more than anything else. He held Hannibal to his chest as warm blood trickled down, hip rolling into his grip. “Hannibal…”

Hannibal moved back, his mouth dripping with blood before he kissed Will, letting him taste himself on his lips. "Will...partake of me and with that, I am yours always."

His smooth pink tongue lapped hungrily from Hannibal’s mouth, like a starving man, tasting himself for the first time, and he groaned lewdly. Pulling him to the floor, Will straddled Hannibal, thick, muscled thighs bracketing either side of his body as he continues biting harsh kisses over swollen lips. “Please…. *please*... ” he murmured, not even knowing what he asked for, only that there was an unending, desperate need inside him.

"We never beg, my dark love. We fucking *take,"* Hannibal hissed seductive and powerful. To further demonstrate, he wrestled him to his back and reached into the entrails and blood, slicking up his cock and Will's hole. He entered him sharply and violently, knowing his demon lover would appreciate the pain. He howled and rumbled thunderously, strong hips pounding into him mercilessly. A demon didn't make love, he fucked. Hard. "Sink your teeth into my flesh, consume me as I give you what we need."

It was a blinding rush of pain that ebbed away rapidly into a surge of power and euphoria. The connection was deep and immediate, Hannibal’s thick, rigid member buried inside Will so completely, it was as though they were conjoined, body and soul. Canines sank into the side of the older demon’s seemingly human neck, marking him, drawing blood of his own, drinking it eagerly in ecstasy. At Hannibal’s words, strong legs lifted and wrapped tight around his waist, ass lifted off the floor, and he braced his hands around his neck, biting and sucking hard.

"Yes…" Hannibal groaned, a storm brewing outside. Thunder began to rumble, lightning flashing, and all The animals seemed to sense the danger coming from that dungeon, deer scattered, and owls twisted their heads curiously, hooting. There was power in the two demons coupling, a force beyond nature. He whipped his hips, muscular ass flexing from the sheer strength of his ministrations. "This is our beginning...ah...you are mine."

Will’s mouth hung open, lips parted like a crimson slash against the white porcelain of his skin, blood smeared over pearly, sharp teeth and blue eyes glowing with a yellow, supernatural hue. He could feel the electricity crackling in the air around them. Will’s hand flailed out beside him and slipped as he reached out and gripped a length of the deceased man’s guts and looped it around Hannibal’s neck like a tie, a low, maniacal chuckle in his throat as he yanked him close so their lips met. “And you...are *mine* .”

Hannibal grinned darkly, kissing him with intensity and abandon, his eyes glowing fiery red. Large balls thudded against Will's ass as a black, inky mist formed around and between them. Inhuman sounds began to resonate from the plush pillows of the demon's mouth, hell itself in awe of their remarkable connection. His orgasm grew nigh. "All yours."

Ankles crossed, Will’s heels dug into Hannibal’s back, and he knew his own climax would come soon. It coiled in his belly and even in this changed form, the principles of pleasure remained the same. His prostate was being stroked with such expert skill, he couldn’t hold

back any longer. *"Hannibal...Hannibal, fuck,"* he growled, panting, and with one palm in the center of his furry chest, his nails curled inward, embedding in Hannibal's flesh like claws as he drew more blood. Ropes of come splashed up his body as Will's head lolled back and he let out an animalistic howl, like a wild beast unleashed. "Hannibal…!"

The blood, breath, and Will's come, all brought Hannibal to the gates of the underworld. Dark and delicious sin. With a few more harsh thrusts he came, his seed filling his lovers body in a rushing. hot gush. He roared his name, kissing him again, looking into his eyes. "Will….!"

The force of Hannibal's orgasm took Will's breath away. Just like the bite mark Hannibal had made over his heart, Will too made one of his own on Hannibal. Removing his hand, five crescent shaped wounds were left there. He panted hard, looking into otherworldly eyes that looked like embers of glowing beryl. "I've never known myself the way I do now, with you. You've made me, composed me, draw me out, shown me what it is to seize my own becoming and evolve, and...I love you." Long fingers smeared blood down the elder demon's sharp cheekbone as he cupped it and rubbed a thumb over the tawny skin there, adoration shining in his eyes.

Hannibal, when he was human, knew love. He never thought it possible to love again, not in this form, with a heart black as coal and no soul and yet he felt it now, for Will. He had changed him too, not a weakness but a strength. They would never be alone again and would walk together down whatever path they chose to select, hand in hand. His cock softened and slipped out, the smell of sex, blood, and sweat in the air. It was perfect. He gazed at his mate and smiled, sharp cheekbones casting shadows on his face under the low light.

"Our hearts and bodies have merged into one. No one can come between us. I love you, Will."

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